

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8179

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 12926

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, US

SUBJECT: GOG CONTINUES UPBEAT LINE ON RELATIONS WITH U.S.

REF: ATHENS 12874

1. IN THE MONTH SINCE THE U.S. ELECTIONS THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS COMMITTED TO THE U.S.-GREEK ALLIANCE, HAS TRIED PERIODICALLY TO INTRODUCE GREATER REALISM INTO GREEK EXPECTATIONS THAT THE NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL BE MUCH MORE FAVORABLE TO THE GREEK CAUSE THAN THE OUT-GOING FORD ADMINISTRATION, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME TRYING TO PRESERVE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OF THE EVOLVING PRO-U.S. TREND IN THE COUNTRY. CONVERSELY, OF COURSE, THE GREEK LEFT HAS A MAJOR INTEREST IN REVERSING THAT TREND AND RESTORING ITS MOST EFFECTIVE POLITICAL WEAPON -- ANTI-AMERICANISM.

2. NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, THE LEFT POUNCED ON THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S COMMENTS TO THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, COMBINING GLOATING WITH A SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN WRONG IN THINKING THERE WOULD BE A CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY (REFTEL). THIS PAST WEEKEND THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY GOVERNOR CARTER THAT CYRUS VANCE WAS HIS CHOICE FOR SECRETARY OF STATE GAVE THE GOG THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL WITH THE OVERALL QUESTION AGAIN.

3. THUS A "SENIOR GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIAL" (MOST PROBABLY
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FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS AT HIS REGULAR WEEKLY MEETING WITH

POLITICAL EDITORS SATURDAY), SPEAKING ON BACKGROUND DECEMBER 4, AFTER REACTING VERY FAVORABLY TO THE APPOINTMENT AND NOTING THE SECRETARY-DESIGNATE'S "GREAT EXPERIENCE WITH THE PROBLEMS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD," INDICATED THAT ALL GREECE HAD EVER WANTED FROM WASHINGTON WAS "OBJECTIVITY" AND A STAND BASED ON JUSTICE. THE "OFFICIAL" REPORTEDLY SAID THAT GREECE NOW EXPECTS "A MORE BALANCED POLICY FROM THE UNITED STATES ON GREEK-TURKISH DISPUTES, ESPECIALLY OVER THE CYPRUS PROBLEM." THE "OFFICIAL" ALSO WAS WIDELY REPORTED TO HAVE SAID, "WE WILL ADOPT A WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE. WHAT WE WANT FROM PRESIDENT CARTER IS A POLICY FOUNDED UPON OBJECTIVITY."

4. A SECOND GOG "OFFICIAL SOURCE" (PROBABLY LAMBRIAS -- PRESS UNDER SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER) ALSO WAS QUOTED OVER THE WEEKEND AS DISASSOCIATING GREECE FROM THE "CELEBRATIONS" OF GOVERNOR CARTER'S ELECTION (COMMENT: THE CELEBRATIONS WERE IN CYPRUS, NOT IN GREECE). HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAD HAD NOTHING TO SAY ABOUT STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER CONCERNING GREECE AND TURKEY, ADDING THAT THE GOG HAD NEVER EXPRESSED ANY "JUBILIATION" OVER CARTER'S ELECTION.

4. COMMENT: DOMESTIC POLITICS AND FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES MAKE THE GOG WANT TO ENCOURAGE THE MORE FAVORABLE ATTITUDES IN GREECE TOWARDS THE U.S. WHILE ALSO SEEKING TO MAINTAIN AN ELEMENT OF RESERVE IN ITS PUBLIC STANCE, THE GOG WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BE AS POSITIVE AS POSSIBLE IN ITS INTERPRETATION OF FUTURE U.S. POLICY MOVES.
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